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BEST FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT NEWS IN THE WEST

Financial Express

San Francisco Financial Center

CAB Partnerships: Financial Management Moves Mountains

In June 2005 the San Francisco Financial Center (SFC) introduced its first Customer Advisory Board (CAB) conference. The goal of the CAB was to improve interagency communication by sharing ideas, success stories, best practices, lessons learned, and agency priorities in a network environment. This was a win-win opportunity for SFC and its agency customers. Federal executives could share first-hand issues and concerns in their payment and collection operations. SFC could gather information about their customers and present the latest Financial Management Service (FMS) products and programs.

"The designation that the meeting was at an executive level was vital. It allowed for a broader exchange of ideas and issues." – Ed Ottenheimer, DOI, Office of Inspector General

The pilot forum was held in Emeryville, California where over 30 executives representing 20 federal agencies attended. The staff of SFC listened and learned as agency executives discussed payment and collection issues such as Secure Payment System (SPS) installation, Internet Check Cancellation, Governmentwide Accounting (GWA), and Pay.gov. The conference concluded with members discussing the



Vice Chair, Meyer Persow, OPM and Chair
Thomas Moyles, NASA Ames Research Center

development of the CAB Charter, and electing Tom Moyles, National Aeronautics & Space Administration (NASA), and Meyer Persow, Office of Personnel Management, as Chair and Vice Chair.

The success of the Emeryville meeting led to a second conference on February 15, 2006 at NASA Ames Research Center in Mountain View, California. Tom Moyles, NASA Ames Chief Financial Officer and SFC CAB Chair, hosted the two-day event. Over 40 agency executives, speakers, guests, and SFC staff attended the event.

The NASA CAB conference featured an all-star lineup of speakers and topics. Ken Papaj, then the FMS Deputy Commissioner, talked

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about the GWA project, Debt Collection and the Go Direct campaign. The NASA Ames Research Center provided world-renowned scientists and expert speakers discussing topics ranging from global warming to the Integrated Enterprise Management Program, the NASA-wide business system.

Tom Moyles praised the San Francisco Financial Center for establishing the CAB and creating a forum for agencies to communicate their payment and collection issues. Mr. Moyles, together with the NASA staff and CAB planning team, introduced breakout sessions focusing on several topics. CAB members discussed the objectives, challenges and solutions to issues relating to payments, collections, Governmentwide Accounting and the centralization of functions.

“FMS briefing was good on automated data- I will definately implement upon my return (Account Statement)” - Connie Sanborn, DOI, National Business Center

The NASA CAB conference proved to be one small step for the Customer Advisory Board and one giant leap for SFC customer agencies. Ed Ottenheimer, Department of the Interior, summed up the conference saying, “It is obvious that a tremendous amount of effort and planning went into this meeting. It was exceptional.” CAB member, Vi Van Otterloo, U.S. Denver Mint, said, “the entire event was well organized and very informative. The breakout sessions and the networking were extremely beneficial for me.”



Thomas Moyles, NASA Ames Research Center and SFC-CAB Chair, Fay Rurup, SFC-PIB Manager, Ken Papaj, FMS Commissioner, and Phil Belisle, SFC Regional Director, discuss the launch of the second CAB in Mountain View, California.



Front row: CAB Mgt Team; Meyer Persow, Dave Martin, Abbie Loftus. Back row: CAB Planning Team; Rhonda Lambert, Fay Rurup, Rick Corrigan, Sandra Young

Meyer Persow, Office of Personnel Management, and David Martin, Internal Revenue Service, hosted the next CAB conference on August 23-24, 2006 at the Hyatt Regency Tech Center in Denver, Colorado. The theme of the Denver CAB was “Effective Financial Management Moves Mountains”. Wanda Rogers, Assistant Commissioner, FMS Regional Operations, was the keynote speaker. Agenda topics included Customer Service Challenges in the Federal Government, “Retirement and You,” Governmentwide Accounting, Treasury Check Information System - an Integrated View, and a panel discussion on Disaster Recovery. CAB members enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of the U.S. Denver Mint and networking dinner at the renowned Fort Restaurant.

“Good exchange of info and ideas at the breakout sessions.” – Candice Thatcher, DOI, Bureau of Land Management

The 2005-2006 SFC-CAB conferences represent the beginning of a great partnership with our agency customers to meet their payment and collection needs. Plans are now under way now for the next CAB conference in Las Vegas, Nevada. Visit our website at www.fms.treas.gov/sfc or call (510) 594-7300 to become a member of the San Francisco Financial Center Customer Advisory Board today.

SPS ~ Faster! ~ Accurate!! ~ Auditable!!!

SPS is the acronym for “Secure Payment System,” used by FMS to disburse payments. It is a secure, web-enabled, payment processing program.

In the spring of 2006, the San Francisco Financial Center hosted the annual SPS Conference, which brought together developers, administrators, and help desk personnel in an effort to find ways to improve and evolve the SPS software. This year’s spotlight was on system maintenance and easier delivery of upgrades. Other topics discussed included advances in technology that will:

- allow users to recertify online
- download SPS updates to their computers
- allow more than one user to work on the same workstation
- allow an individual to use one username and password for all FMS applications



Back row: Mike Cable, Raghu Vallurupalli, Jackie Mitchell, Pete Beckett, Jason Boire, Janice Bowers, Ralf Jordan, Van Johnson, Tyrone Toney, Chris Enoch, Johnny Navarra, Sally Sebastian. Middle row: Dick Bauder, Gary Ng, Wally Ingram, Racine Milburn, Vikki Dorsey, Tequilla Baskin, Christine Golladay, Bobbie Mickens, Leo Santiago, Sandra Young. Seated: James Prial, Tammy Owen, Marsha Mayo-Hunter, Judy Lansing, Brenda Sowada, Chris Garrett, Joan Harper, Paul Do

For more information on this product, visit:

www.fms.treas.gov/sps

To talk to an SPS professional, contact:

SPS Help Desk at (510) 594-7144.

Vanguard:

And the Winner is....

Since 1993 San Francisco Financial Center (SFC) has recognized federal agencies for their contributions to improving the federal payment and collection process. The SFC Vanguard Award has been presented to thirteen deserving federal agency recipients. So, what do all of these people have in common? They have all been recognized for their significant achievements towards improving SFC sponsored projects and initiatives.

The purpose of the Vanguard Award is to acknowledge SFC customer agencies for their contributions to improving SFC operations. Previous winners of this prestigious award have been instrumental in standardizing payment processes, expediting disaster recovery payments, automating manual processes, educating and converting benefit recipients to Direct Deposit and improving the Treasury Offset Program.

Each year, SFC employees submit their nominations with detailed descriptions of the nominee's achievements to the Customer Relations Team. The team carefully reviews the nominations to ensure that they meet the requirements for eligibility. Although all of the nominees have made a contribution to improving SFC processes, the employees have the arduous task of casting their vote for the recipient that has made the biggest impact. The nominee with a majority vote is submitted to the SFC Regional Director for final approval.

SFC was honored to present the trophy for the 2005 Vanguard Award to Mr. Lowell Kepke of the Social Security Administration (SSA) in Richmond,



California. Mr. Kepke was selected from a pool of highly distinguished nominees for promoting the "Go-Direct" program to more than 70 Social Security Offices in the western region of the United States. Go-Direct is a Financial Management Service initiative to encourage federal benefit recipients to sign up for Direct Deposit. As a result of his efforts, the important Go-Direct message reached more than 5 million SSA and SSI recipients.

You could be the next Vanguard Award winner to represent SFC's continued appreciation for outstanding contributions from customer agencies. The next Vanguard Award nominations will begin in January of 2007.

Last Ten Vanguard Winners

2005	Lowell Kepke, SSA
2004	Federal Records Center, Burlingame, CA
2003	Mike Cable, Austin Financial Center
2002	PACER On-line Team
2001	Birmingham Debt Management Operations Center
2000	OPM Retirement Operations Branch
1999	Brian DeCosta & Eric Erlandson, DataCard
1998	Marilyn Ridgeway, California Department of Rehabilitation
1997	Charles and Richard Donahue, U.S. Postal Service Mint Unit
1996	Irish Hinds, GSA



Ask SFC

Q: Can an agency delegate to a shared service provider its Certifying Officer functions?

A: A federal agency may utilize a service provider to pull together a payment voucher file. However the responsibility for certifying the appropriateness of the payment voucher may not be delegated to the service provider. A Certifying Officer (CO) of an executive agency is by definition a Civilian Employee who works for a federal agency on an appointment without time limitation who is paid from appropriated funds, which includes working capital funds. A foreign national employee, temporary employee, term employee, non-appropriated fund employee, or uniformed personnel are not included in this definition.

The rules governing the roles and responsibilities of a CO are governed by Title 31, Chapter 35, Subchapter III, U.S.C. 3528 and Title 31, Chapter 33, Subchapter II section 3328, which outlines a CO's responsibility for the accuracy and legality of the payments made from federal funds that they approve. Further information on the role of a CO may also be found in: "Now that You're a Certifying Officer" which is available at: http://www.fms.treas.gov/tfm/vol1/certifying_officer.pdf.



Q: Why haven't I received my updates and information from SFC?

A: Invitations to forums, educational opportunities, TFM updates, Fund Balance updates and more are sent out to agency contacts. If you have not been receiving these, drop SFC an email at financialexpress@fms.treas.gov to update your contact information. It's that easy!

Q: Whenever I have a more obscure question, I never know who to call. Is there one phone number that I can always rely on to point me in the right direction?

A: SFC will be happy to help you connect with the product, process, or initiative expert within the facility. Just call: 510-594-7300 and you'll be directed to the person that can best serve you.

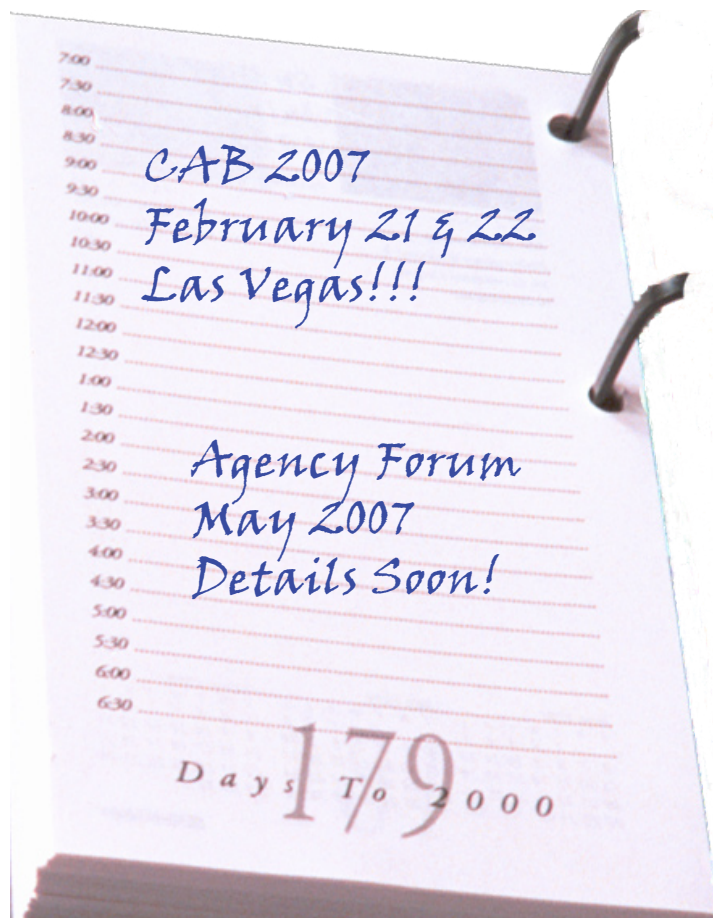
Q: We have been receiving a lot of complaints from our payees recently that they have not been receiving their foreign check payments on time, and sometimes, not at all. What could be causing this problem? Can you help us?

A: To improve the receipt of foreign mail by the recipients, ensure the following is correctly entered into the payment information:

1. Always include the NAME of the country on the payment.
2. Always include the correct 3-digit Geographical (GEO) code on the payment.
3. NEVER use a 5-digit or 9-digit U.S. zip code on the payment.

These tips will solve 90% of your foreign check delivery problems.

Calendar



Current Value of Funds: 4.0%
1/1/2007 - 12/31/2007

Prompt Pay: 5.750%
7/1/2006 - 12/31/2006



FeedBack:

**SFC is committed
to building partnerships
with agency customers.
Questions? Comments?
Is there an article you would like
to see?**

Write us at:

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